



7 Scientifically Proven Steps to Increase Your Influence

**by
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SCIENCE OF **PEOPLE**

Welcome!

I'm delighted to have you as part of our course:
7 Scientifically Proven Steps to Increase Your Influence.

I have one question for you:

Do you know your influence factor?

This course will help you understand exactly that.

Most of us have no idea what impact we have on the people around us. If anyone has ever forgotten your name, or worse, forgot that they have met you before, you need to increase your influence factor.

And you're not alone.
More importantly, it's not your fault.



TODAYS #1 CHALLENGE: INCREASING YOUR IMPACT

Do any of these situations sound familiar to you?

- You're incredibly talented, *but* you can't land your dream career.
- You're an awesome catch, *but* you can't find the right partner.
- You seem to have enough, *but* you always feel like something is missing from your life.

Whether you're in business, social situations or the dating world, influence is critical. Luckily we can help.

And I promise, this ain't your mama's self-help...

The Answer: Sexy Science Meets Self-Help

We will show you a smarter way to interact. At the Science of People, we follow one theme: unlock the secrets of human behavior to increase your influence.

We're going to teach you 7 scientifically backed ways to increase your influence in an authentic, practical and entertaining way.

Let's do it!



#1 Turn People ON

I want you to turn people on.

Tsk, tsk, tsk, get your mind out of the gutter.

I mean, mentally turn people on. Influence is about stimulating people to think and feel in new and exciting ways.

Challenging people and getting their creative juices flowing makes you positively irresistible.

Let me show you how:

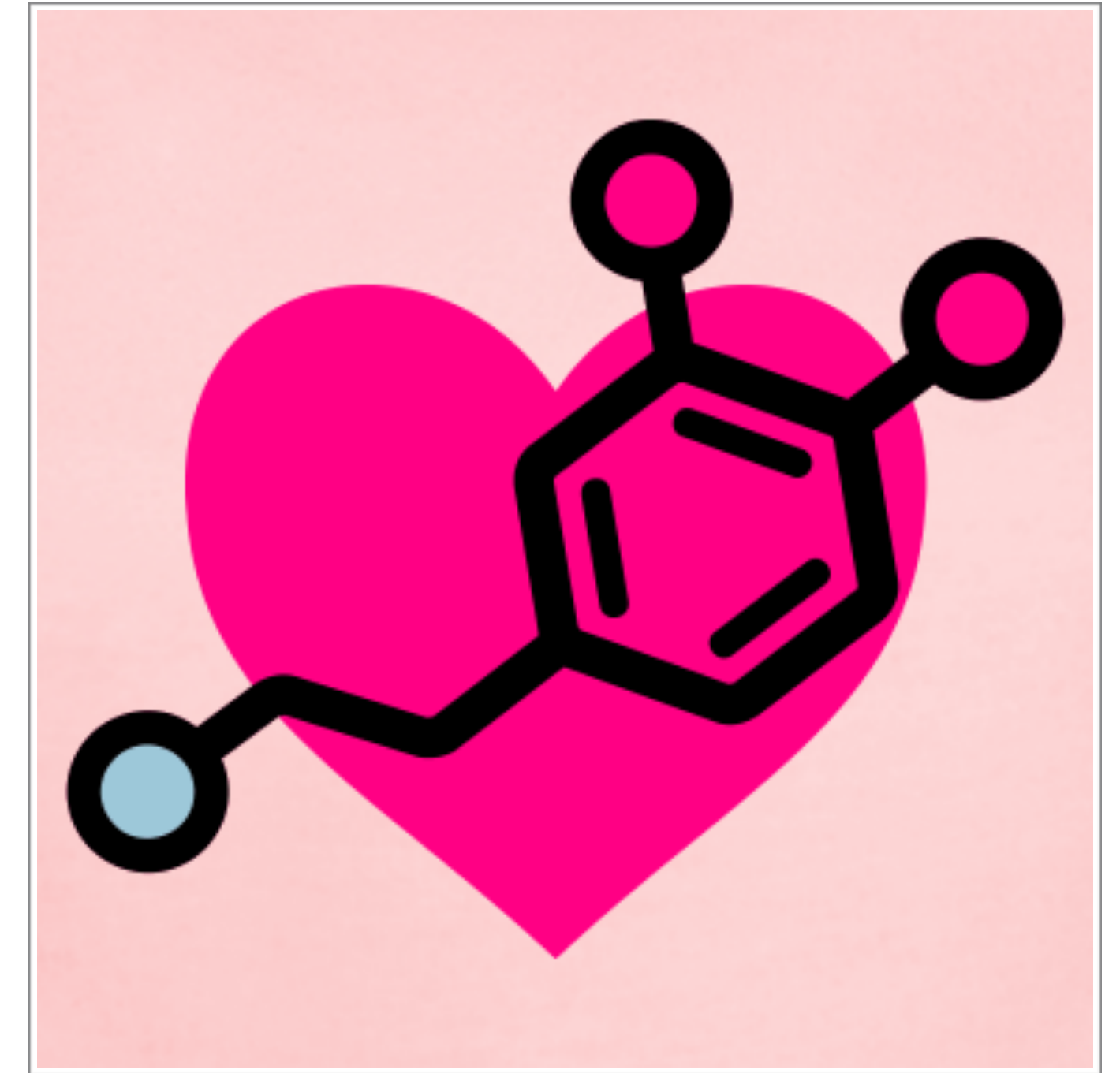


THE RESEARCH

Molecular biologist John Medina found that our brains are easily bored and need constant stimulation to stay engaged.

The best way to intrigue, influence and impact someone is to get their **dopamine** pumping. Dopamine is the neurotransmitter released when we experience pleasure, or win a contest. In other words, dopamine floods our brains when we feel good.

The best part: Seth J. Gillihan found one could easily trigger dopamine with the right thoughts and interactions.



THE SOLUTION

You should be a **dopamine junkie**.

When you interact with people, relentlessly find topics that tickle their brain's pleasure centers.

If you can activate people's mental reward networks, you will be the most memorable person in every room.

Here's how...

Abandon boring social scripts.

You know when you go to a party and everyone asks the same questions over and over again? Typically: "What do you do?" and "Where are you from?"

I know this is scary, but I want you to throw those questions into a smelly pit of burning sewage. Ok, that might be a bit extreme, but you get the idea. I want you to **Stop. Being. Boring.**

I've listed a set of stimulating, intriguing, and, lets be honest, flat out ballsy conversation starters below.

Next time you want to be remembered, use these to provoke interesting and unique interactions with those around you. This gets the dopamine flowing, challenges your conversation partner's thinking and makes you memorable.

YOUR CHALLENGE

With every strategy, I will offer you one challenge. For this challenge, I want you to break out of your comfort zone and milk yourself some dopamine.

I challenge you to abandon social scripts and start using dopamine-worthy conversation starters.

Look through my list of favorites below and pick at least one juicy one to try in the next 7 days and then tweet me what happens:

Twitter @vvanedwards

BONUS: Tweet me some dopamine-worthy conversation starters of your own!



KILLER CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What personal passion project are you working on right now?
- Who is the most interesting person you met tonight?
- What was the best part of your day and the worst part of your day so far?
- Did you see that viral _____ YouTube video? It was all over my social media today.
- On a scale of 1 to undrinkable, how terrible is the wine?
- So I'm not sure where to go on vacation this year. Have you taken a good vacation recently?
- Can I confess to something? I read an article about conversation tips. They had some ridiculous suggestions...
- Any chance you read the news today? I missed it, and I'm dying to know what's happening with [insert news topic here].
- So, what's your story?
- I'm trying to make myself meet new people here instead of just talking to the usual suspects. Do you mind me saying hello and introducing myself?
- So how do you spend your time when you aren't at events like this?
- Tell me about your business and what made you decide to become a_____. I love hearing people's "why" stories".
- What do you like about your job?

The Bottom Line:

By jolting people out of boring social scripts, you activate their brain's dopamine and people will remember how great it feels to be with you.



#2 Be Emotionally

HORNY

Gather 'round my precious ones, I wish to tell you a story:

In the year 1867, there was a fierce battle being fought. The contenders were Benjamin Disraeli and William Gladstone. The prize? Becoming the next Prime Minister of England.

During the heat of the political battle both men met a certain young female. They both asked her to lunch.

As the dates took place the press waited anxiously to see which man she liked better. Could this young female predict the outcome of the race?

Here's what she said:

"After sitting next to Mr. Gladstone, I thought he was the cleverest person in England. But after sitting next to Mr. Disraeli, I thought I was the cleverest person in England."

Can you guess who won the election? Benjamin Disraeli became the Prime Minister.

He knew that to be important, he had to make others feel important.

Influence guru Dale Carnegie once said, "to be interesting, *you have to be interested*." In other words, the more interested you are in others, the more interesting you seem to them.

THE RESEARCH

Surprise, surprise, research has found that people love to talk about themselves.

Even though this isn't exactly a shocking scientific finding, there are some amazing facts that help us understand influence.

First, on average, people spend **60% of conversations** talking about themselves—and this jumps to **80%** when communicating on social media platforms like Twitter or Facebook.

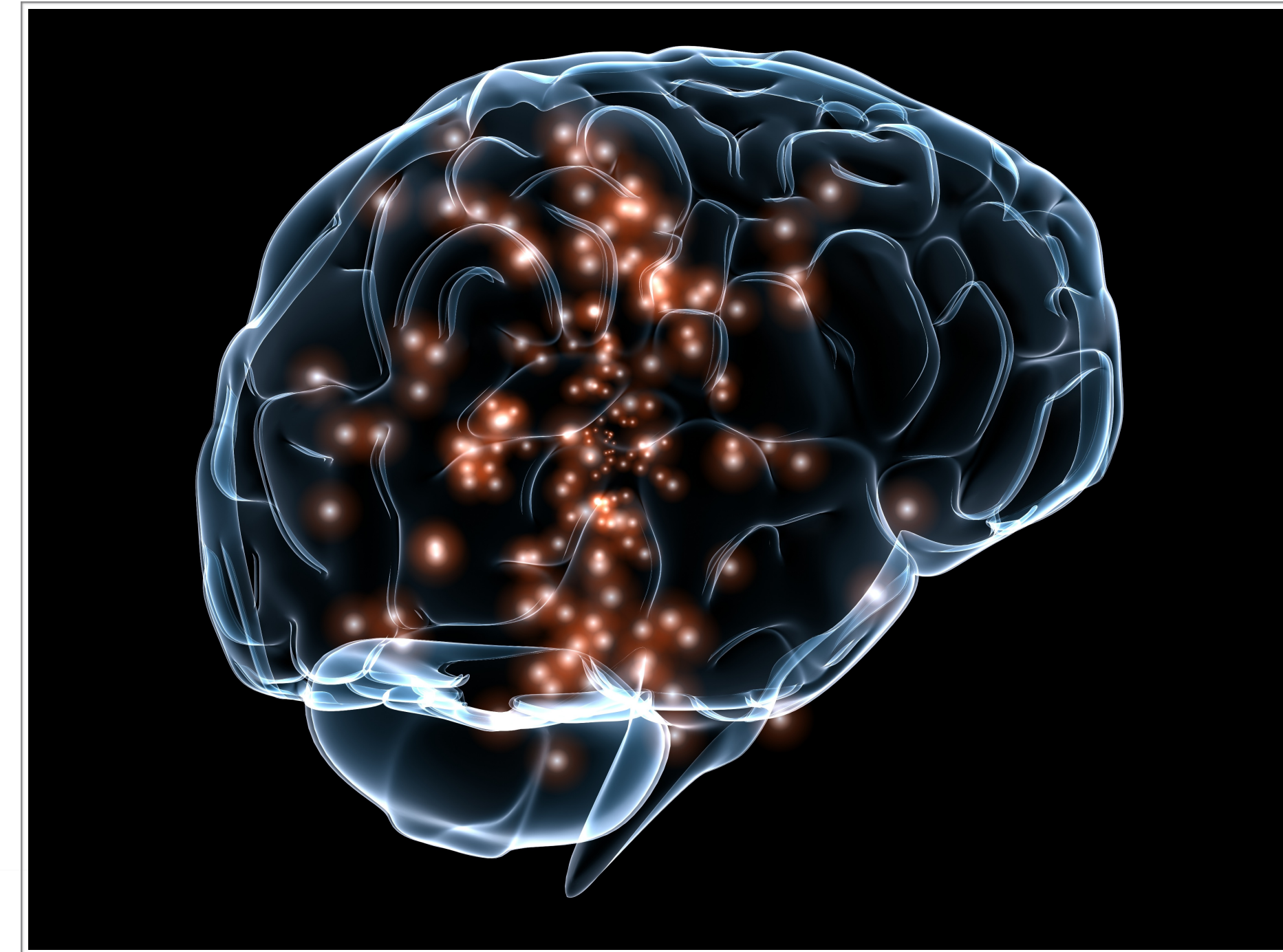
Second, our brains change when we talk about ourselves.

Researcher Diana Tamir looked at brain activity as subjects performed various activities. She found that the most brain activation happened when participants talked about themselves.

And this activation didn't happen in just any area. It happened in the area of the brain associated with reward and motivation.

In other words, for our brain, revealing personal information to others feels like winning a race, finding a reward or opening a big present.

This study makes it easy to see why being interested in others makes you seem interesting. You are literally rewarding their brain!



THE SOLUTION

Get people talking about themselves—and genuinely listen.

Here's how you can get people talking, stimulate great conversation and increase your influence:

1. Ask Open-Ended Questions:

In conversations ask “How” and “Why” questions instead of “What” and “Where” questions.

For example, instead of asking “What do you do?” ask “How did you decide on your career path?”

2. Ask Them to Dig Deeper

Second City is one of the most successful Improv Theater companies in the world. After many years of entertaining audiences they have learned there is one key to success.



THE SOLUTION

It's the rule of **“Yes, and...”**

The rule of “Yes, and...” means that during an improv scene, actors have to be open to whatever ideas are thrown into a scene. They have to accept what's happening and then add to it.

And this is exactly what I want you to do with your interactions.

When you are networking, on a date or in a meeting, I want you to think about how you can use, “Yes, and...” by adding thoughts, examples and comments. This keeps your partner talking about themselves longer, keeping their brain engaged.

Caveat: I don't want you to agree blindly. So, if you disagree with someone it's also okay to use the “No, but...” rule. This is when you can politely disagree and then add a “but” to find common ground.



YOUR CHALLENGE

I want you to try a little experiment. At the Science of People we love doing experiments on quirky human behavior and encourage people to try their own. Now it's your turn!

I challenge you to practice “Yes, and...” or “No, but...” in action.

It can be a little intimidating to do this in person right away, so I want you to practice with online chat.

1. Go onto Facebook chat, Gchat or any instant messaging client and find an old friend, casual acquaintance or business colleague to catch up with.

Warning: Do **NOT** choose an Ex-Lover...they will think you want to get back together. I learned this the hard way!

2. Ping them with something like: “Hey! It's been a while, what's been going on with you?”
3. As you catch up, practice using “Yes, and...” or “No, but...” for at least 10 minutes.
4. Practice until it feels natural and then try it in person!

The Bottom Line:

Be interested in what people have to say and you will be memorable.



#3 Let's Get PHYSICAL

We couldn't talk about influence without exploring power. And the way I like to talk about power is through body language. As you get to know me you will find I **LOVE** talking about nonverbal research.

Studies show that at a minimum, 60% of our communication is nonverbal—and some studies have found it to be up to 93%! We communicate power nonverbally through our facial expressions, body language and voice tone.

If you want to be influential you have to use 100% of your abilities. **You can't just rely on your words alone.**



THE RESEARCH

Researchers at Harvard Business School wanted to know if body language could affect other's opinions of us.

The answer: A resounding **YES!**

To test their hypothesis the researchers had two groups of participants conduct mock job interviews. They had the interviewers rate the participants on overall performance, hireability and speaker presence (like being passionate and warm).

While one group simply went into the interview, the other group had to pose in power body language for two minutes before walking into the examination room.

The researchers hypothesized power posers would rate higher in speaker presence. The results showed that not only were the power posers rated higher in speaker presence than anticipated, they were *ALSO* rated higher for overall performance and hireability!

THE RESEARCH

Power body language does in fact make you more influential—AND on multiple levels!

Researchers then wondered: if power body language affects the way others perceive us, could it affect the way we perceive ourselves?

The answer: An amazing **YES!**

In a follow-up study, the Harvard Business School researchers found that following just five minutes of power posing, subjects had increased levels of testosterone (the strength hormone) and decreased levels of cortisol (the stress hormone)!

This means power body language also makes us ***feel*** more powerful!

THE SOLUTION

Use power body language to up your power.

You can use power body language to influence others, but also to feel more influential yourself.

Use Pre-Power Poses before going to an important event, meeting or date to increase your testosterone levels and to feel more confident.

Pre-power poses are all about taking up space and claiming territory:

You want to avoid low-power poses with crossed arms and legs:

When in interactions use Ideal Power Poses to show, feel and exude confidence:



YOUR CHALLENGE

My challenge for you is to test your current body language skills.

Most people have no idea what their nonverbal behavior is saying. Take our body language quiz and find out:

Body Language Quiz

<http://www.scienceofpeople.com/quiz>

The Bottom Line:

Power body language makes you both look and feel confident.



#4 Once Upon a TIME

Once upon a time there was a struggling toy inventor. Every day he tried to make beautiful, fun, silly toys that made children laugh. But no one would buy his toys.

He made cute bears that no one wanted. He made adorable stuffed turtles that no one wanted.

The toy inventor was on his last dollar. Until one day he had an idea. He mortgaged his home and used his last bit of life savings for this one final toy.

This toy, he decided would have a name and a story.

The toy was called Beanie Babies.

Each Beanie Baby toy was given a name and a story. And kids finally wanted one. Not just one, every single one.

He made \$700 million dollars in one year.

That is the power of stories.

Kids (and even some adults) loved the stories attached with each Beanie Baby. And those stories made sales skyrocket.

Beanie Babies used the power of stories to increase their influence. And now you can too.

THE RESEARCH

Our brains love stories.

Amazing things happen when our brains hear stories:

1. When scientists put people in fMRI machines, their brains light up when they hear stories.
2. During a story our language processing neural pathways activate, and the parts of our brain that we would have used if we had actually experienced the story also light up!

Yes, you read that right. **When our brain hears a story it acts like it was a part of the story**—this is why stories are so thrilling to hear. We feel like we are a part of the experience.

3. When someone tells us a story our brain activity actually begins to match the narrator's brain activity. Straight from the fancy-pants research...



THE RESEARCH

“We applied fMRI to record brain activity from both speakers and listeners during natural verbal communication. We used the speaker's spatiotemporal brain activity to model listeners' brain activity and found that the speaker's activity is spatially and temporally coupled with the listener's activity.” –Greg J. Stephens

This means stories not only help engage your listener, but also help you get on the same wavelength as them—literally, you begin to think on the same brain wavelength.

You can use this tasty nugget of science to increase your influence.

If you know how to use stories, people will remember you—giving their brain a nice dose of interesting sprinkled with a boost of energy.

THE SOLUTION

Create a story toolbox.

A story toolbox is a set of authentic, interesting and stimulating stories you have at the ready.

I started using a story toolbox and I was amazed at how many strangers would eavesdrop on my conversations at networking events and then sidle up and ask to join our campfire—oops, I mean conversation. Everyone wants to hear a good story. **Our brains crave it.**

The key with the story toolbox is to be able to naturally weave in stories you enjoy telling and then follow them up with a challenging question. Once you think of your favorite stories, you will be surprised how easily you can bring them into conversations and how much you learn about people in the process.

You will also notice that when you are able to use a story from your toolbox, you will have a higher request rate for your business card. Those people will remember you every time they see you.

Here's an example of a story of how it works.



SOME WEIRD NAME STORY

Whenever I hear an interesting, unusual or beautiful name I ask that person where their name comes from. This gets them talking about themselves. After that I share my favorite story (from my story toolbox) about names. It goes like this:

Wow, what a great name story!

You want to know what the weirdest name I ever heard was?

(People express interest and lean in with anticipation.)

When I was growing up there was a set of twins that went to my school and you will not believe what their parents named them. Can you guess?

(People start to throw out crazy, funny and outlandish guesses).

These twins were named Malé and Femalé. Pronounced Mal-ehhh and Fe-mal-ehhh.

(People giggle, grown, and exclaim over the parents cruelty).

So, what's the weirdest name you've ever heard?

There are two important aspects to this:

1) The stories in my story toolbox are all related to topics that frequently come up in conversations. I often meet people with interesting, beautiful or unusual names.

2) This story (like all stories in your story toolbox) needs to have a thought-provoking question at the end that you can ask the other person. This ending question works great because then you can easily get to know more about them and get their dopamine juices flowing.

Now it's your turn.

YOUR CHALLENGE

I challenge you to create your story toolbox.

Your goal is to find three to four stories you can keep at the ready for social interactions. Eventually you will have 10 to 20 as you gather them from books, news sources or funny events.

Insider Tip: I have a note on my phone where I write down juicy stories for my toolbox.

Ask yourself the following to help build your story toolbox:

- What's the most interesting study, book or article you've ever read?
- When did a person, situation or moment turn out differently than you expected?
- What was your most challenging moment and how did you overcome it?
- What's the best story you've ever heard?
- What's the weirdest event you've ever been to?

One More Insider Tip: I remembered a bunch of amazing stories when I got myself a box of the game Table Topics. This is a box of cards printed with thought-provoking questions. After the first few cards I was able to add a ton of new stories to my list.



The Bottom Line:

Telling stimulating stories makes you memorable, impactful and increases your influence.



#5* Get **NAKED*

I WANT YOU TO GET NAKED.

You guessed it. Emotionally naked, not physically naked--although that would probably win you some new friends too.

What do I mean by, “Emotionally Naked?” Emotional nudity means stripping off our ego, not trying to impress people and being real.

This might sound counterintuitive, but **research has found that vulnerability actually increases our likeability**. It also helps us connect with people.

This is the opposite of what many of us do every time we interact. We are taught to not show vulnerability, so we try to hide our weaknesses in social interactions. I am going to show you why and how we should embrace our imperfections.

THE RESEARCH

Psychologist Richard Wiseman conducted a study where two actresses sell a blender to mall goers. Actress one had a perfect presentation and produced a flawless smoothie to viewers. Actress two had a great presentation but “accidentally” forgot to tighten the lid and the smoothie splashed all over her.

Wiseman wondered who would sell more blenders. The perfect performer? Or the vulnerable performer?

Can you guess who sold more blenders and who was rated higher by audience members?

Actress #2, ‘the clumsy’ woman, was rated as more likeable. **Wiseman found that her vulnerability humanized her and therefore increased her influence on the audience.**

This effect has been shown over and over again in the research. When we admit to weakness, others connect with us and see us as more likeable.



THE SOLUTION

I want you to be honest about your vulnerabilities. Don't be afraid to admit to some of your silly shortcomings, imperfections or weaknesses.

If you're feeling awkward at an event, say so. I do this frequently when I'm at events where I don't know anyone. I'll grab a drink, turn to the person next to me and say, "Hey, I'm Vanessa and I don't know anyone here. Can I pretend to know you?" This usually gets a laugh and then I truly do get to know them.

If you would rather be at home watching Netflix, mention it to a new contact to build camaraderie. I use this while waiting in lines frequently.

For example, I was recently in a line for the bathroom at a nightclub and turned to the girl next to me and said, "I would give my left arm to take these heels off and get in my bathtub right now, you?" She laughed, commiserated and we found we had a ton of mutual friends in common. Digital Happily Ever After: We're now friends on Facebook.

Random Note: I make a point of avoiding nightclubs at all costs and insist to my friends that I am secretly 80 years old. However, they still force me out for birthdays and special occasions.

You can also embrace your vulnerabilities by sharing stories from your story toolbox. These can be embarrassing moments, funny flubs or silly flaws. This way you use the science of storytelling and the research on vulnerability to connect with people.

YOUR CHALLENGE

I challenge you to commit to continued learning.

The ultimate vulnerability is asking for help. No matter how influential you are, you can always learn and grow.

And that is my mission: To inspire you, empower you and help you increase your impact.

If you haven't already, sign-up to get our free **Monthly Insights from Science of People**.

We will send you follow-up challenges, videos and research to keep your influence growing.

Science of People Insights

The Bottom Line:

Being vulnerable and embracing your imperfections makes you memorable, relatable and inspiring.



#6 Favor ME?

Can I ask you for a favor?

Will you please share this course with one person who could benefit?

Of course, I would love for you to share this course, but the real reason I asked is due to something called the Franklin Effect.

Benjamin Franklin was a major influencer in his lifetime. He was a politician, author, inventor, scholar and businessman. And we can take a lesson from him on influence.

There is a famous story about Benjamin Franklin that lives on in legend. And I am going to share it with you now. (Wake up brain, another story for you!)

During Benjamin Franklin's first term in office, he made both friends and enemies. As his re-election approached he worried he would not be able to garner the votes needed to win. One of his adversaries was highly influential and Franklin knew he needed to sway this man to his side if he wanted to win.

Instead of trying to convince him, bribe him or cajole him, Franklin sent him a letter asking for a favor. He asked if he could borrow a favorite rare book from his collection. The man was flattered and excited to find Franklin had a similar taste in books. He sent Franklin the book right away. Franklin read it and returned it with a thank you note.

According to Franklin's autobiography, the adversary approached Franklin during the next legislature meeting and the two spoke congenially about the book and other common interests. Not only did the man stop speaking ill of Franklin, the two actually became close friends.

Franklin had discovered that if you ask for a favor, you win a friend.

THE RESEARCH

Science has studied the Franklin Effect and verified it.

In one experiment, psychologists told participants they could win some money. While in the experiment, an actor pretended to be a researcher and treated participants rudely, while demanding they complete the tests. At the end of the tests, the participants won a small amount of cash.

Now, here's where it gets interesting:

In trial one, the fake scientist follows the student out of the lab and asks for a favor. “Would you mind returning the cash? I’m funding the study with my own money and we are almost out of funding!”

In trial two, a secretary ran after the students and asked for the same favor.

In trial three, the participants were able to keep their winnings.

Can you guess which of the trial students rated the rude scientist as the most likeable?

Just as the Franklin Effect predicted, **the students who were asked a favor by the rude scientist also rated him as the most likeable.**

This is pretty crazy, but research and history proves it: Asking a favor from someone else actually makes them perceive you more positively.

THE SOLUTION

Don't be afraid to ask for help.

This solution is NOT to ask favors of every person you meet. That would be disingenuous and spammy.

But I do want the Franklin Effect to show you that asking for help is not only OK, but awesome for influence building .

Here's how you can use the Franklin Effect to increase your influence in an authentic way:

Regularly ask for advice, opinions and guidance.

This has HUGE benefits:

1. It gets people talking about their opinions.
2. It stimulates interesting and unique conversation.
3. This is an easy way to admit vulnerability and the need for guidance.
4. You use the Franklin Effect in an authentic way!

THE SOLUTION

Once a month, I go through my goals and challenges.

(Hint, hint, I am going to help you do this below).

Then, when I'm at networking events, parties or coffee meetings, I bring up one of my challenges and ask for advice.

Examples:

So, I would love your advice on something: ____

Hey, can I brainstorm some ideas with you about this new ____ project I'm working on?

Speaking of which, do you have any thoughts on how to fix / change / solve ____?



YOUR CHALLENGE

I challenge you to pinpoint your current goals and challenges.

Use the following prompts to think about your goals for the coming month. Then figure out what your biggest challenges are and who you might be able to ask for help.

- What are 3 goals you have for the next month? What do you want to achieve or complete?
- What are 3 challenges or problems you are currently facing?
- Who can you ask for help with these issues? What could you say to them?

The Bottom Line:

Ask for guidance and you will increase your influence by showing vulnerability using the Franklin Effect and getting others to talk about their opinions.



#7 Get CONTAGIOUS

If we want to increase our influence, we have to talk about **charisma**.

For the last three months at the Science of People human behavior lab, we have been researching charisma. To do this we asked over 500 people this question:

Who is the most charismatic person you know?

We wanted to know what it is about someone that makes them **magnetic, influential** and **likeable**.

As people recalled their Casanova, we were struck by how many people told us that their person made them ‘feel’ good.

Very rarely did people tell us how attractive or well-spoken someone was. More often they talked about feelings—the feelings that are stirred up when they are together.

And the research backs this up...

THE RESEARCH

MIT Media Lab found that most people don't remember what someone looks like, or what someone says, but they DO remember what it feels like to be with them.

Charismatic people make us feel good.

Psychologist Howard Friedman devised a test to gauge people's charisma levels. He wanted to see if the people who scored high on his charisma test could influence the people who scored low on his charisma test. In other words, he wanted to know if charismatic people can influence others.

First, Wiseman administered an in-depth mood survey of his subject's current emotional state—happy, sad, irritable, or whatever they were feeling in the moment.

Immediately following this survey he had one low charismatic person and one high charismatic person stand in the same room together for 2 minutes. They were not allowed to speak to each other and they could only observe the other person for the full 2 minutes.

After the 2 minutes they were immediately given the mood survey again.

THE RESEARCH

And this is the amazing part:

After only spending two minutes together, even without speaking, the low charismatic person picked up the mood of the highly charismatic person in most of the trials. There was not a single trial where a highly charismatic person picked up the mood of a lowly charismatic person.

Remember, there was no talking going on in these experiments! So **the charismatic person was able to transfer their mood, without realizing it, solely through their nonverbal behavior**. That's some powerful stuff.

This gives us two “**AHA!**” moments:

1. Your mood is contagious. The more influential you are the more you can inspire others.
2. Our charisma has very little to do with our words. We can influence people solely based on our nonverbal.

Let's learn how to leverage this...

THE SOLUTION

There are three ways you can nonverbally be charismatic. And they are easy to remember as the Three T's: Tilt, Torso and Toes.

Tilt: Highly charismatic people show they are listening. You can do this by slightly tilting your head during conversation. When you want to show a conversational partner you are engaged, you can slightly tilt your head to nonverbally show you are listening to every word.

Torso and Toes: We nonverbally show we are engaged when we aim our torso and toes towards others. This is a nonverbal sign of respect.

When you speak with someone be sure to have your toes and torso aimed directly at them to show you are engaged and you value their time and thoughts.



YOUR CHALLENGE

This time let's dig a little deeper!

Since our moods are contagious, **I want to get you into a positive mindset.**

I challenge you to tell me 5 things you are grateful for.

We are incredibly lucky, but sometimes we forget. This exercise will not only help you remember how fortunate you are, but also help you feel great.

...And if you feel awesome, you can inspire others to feel awesome.

Ok, your turn. Right now, I challenge you to list 5 things you are grateful for in your life.

Tweet Me: @vvanedwards #imgratefulfor

The Bottom Line:

Harness your charisma and inspire others to do the same.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Thank you for taking this journey with me. I can't wait to hear about all of the changes you're about to make.

By digging deep into the science of influence and harnessing your charisma, you will be able to successfully navigate personal interactions. **You'll be able to make a strong impression on the people you meet and be remembered.**

I have also included some awesome bonus videos for you to watch, but before you dive into them, I want to offer one more challenge:

Dr. Laura King performed a research experiment trying to figure out the scientific causes of happiness. She found expressive writing is one activity that boosts happiness levels.

We learned happiness is contagious, and influential people spread positivity. So I want to leave you feeling awesome so you can share the love.

YOUR FINAL CHALLENGE

I challenge you to write about your ideal future. I want you to explore where you want to be in 5 years.

There's another secret reason why this is my final challenge to you. Whenever I'm teaching, writing or speaking I have one goal. And that's to make sure you feel great with me. I always want to leave you happier and more knowledgeable than when we first met.

And making you feel awesome also makes me feel awesome.

- **Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?**
- **What do you hope to have achieved?**
- **What are three amazing things that you hope will happen in the next 5 years?**
- **What can you do to make those happen?**

If you want to go the extra mile you can even send me your ideal self entry. I love hearing from you!

See you in our next course. And remember... the end is just the beginning.

ScienceofPeople.com

CITATIONS

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